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ABSTRACT

This paper proposes that research and scholarship regarding nationalistic education be encouraged in order to increase our understanding of this form of values education. Nationalistic education, defined as those educational activities designed to develop a belief in national values, usually incorporates three dimensions: (1) development of positive feelings toward those rituals, ceremonies, symbols, and persons which express or incorporate national values; (2) development of competency in operating as a national citizen; and (3) development of negative feelings toward countries, ideologies, symbols, and persons which are considered contranational. Since all three aspects are value laden, their uncritical indoctrination for national ideals must not be left unexamined. Some of the studies conducted in this field and suggestions of several kinds of research that can contribute to this study are described. These include historical research, current documents study, text and materials analysis, censorship investigation, sociopsychological instrument development and use, interviews, and longitudinal attitude studies. (Author/DE)

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ON THE STUDY OF NATIONALISTIC EDUCATION

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On the Study of Nationalistic Education*

Jack L. Nelson

One of the current emphases in social education, as in other areas of the school curriculum, is values education. The movement toward treatment of values in school subjects developed momentum in the late 1960s, but swelled to flood-like proportions between 1970 and today. In the social studies it is virtually impossible to attend a conference or workshop that doesn't have some expert or discussion on values education. The literature of the field has expanded rapidly with a variety of works expressing theory, practice, criticism and moralism.[1] As a contributor to that literature, and an advocate of at least one approach to values education, I obviously consider the movement a positive activity. While there are many aspects of, or approaches to, values study that I disapprove or remain skeptical of, there is no dispute on my part that examination of values is a necessary part of education.

It is not the intent of this paper, however, to explain or evaluate values education. Rather, the reason for beginning with statements about the current movement is to raise the question of why. Why values education now? Within the answers to this question are some reasons also for examining particular values, in the case of this paper, nationalistic values, as they are expressed and

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studied in schools. Values construed as national, American and patriotic, and those construed as contra-national are dominant features of social studies programs and deserve considerable attention by scholars in the field.

Why values education now?

One answer, from a cynic, would be that the curriculum manipulators had run out of "new social studies" discipline-oriented changes and needed a new slogan.

Another answer is that the pendulum swing from cognitive revisions of the 1960s to affective concerns of the 1970s naturally led to values study.

A third view would be that the system is cyclic, undulating between emphasis on subjects and on students, and that values education is like old-style morality lessons and character education; thus, there is nothing significant about its occurrence at this time.

A more comprehensive answer relates the social education curriculum with the social context. This answer is eclectic in that it incorporates portions of the others. Essentially, the notion is t the social studies respond to the society, given educational , by developing courses, materials and structures for identified social problems. This idea is well expressed by J. Minor Gwynn in Curriculum Principles and Social Trends.[2] A curriculum manipulator could perceive changes in the societal context and jump on the bandwagon; the cognitive curriculum changes after Sputnik and the result-

ing cry of dehumanization in schools show the pendulum operating in terms of the society; and the cyclic view can be applied to social change as readily as it can to curricular change.

The concept of linkage between social phenomena and social education is a useful one for contemplating nationalistic education. If the recent past is considered, it is clear that we have experienced and may still be in the throes of---a national trauma. The Viet Nam War, with its confused and deceitful rationale, created conditions which have seriously taxed the fabric of values which had come to be relatively well established as an "American creed." During and following World WarII the United States developed a national unity largely based on what was generally considered a justified war against oppression by the forces of freedom. Even acts of gross inhumanity like the imprisonment of Japanese-Americans and the dropping of atomic bombs on civilian populations did not seriously alter majority views of national honor and integrity. A few minor dissidents protested, but the American public's faith in its system of government and in its view of the proper values for human society persisted.

The perceived threat of Communism during the Cold War period served to continue American belief in the justice of their cause and the need for unity in national values. McCarthyism created some distress, but it was explained as an aberration, an overzealous attempt to root out the enemy, but not a basic flaw in the American way of life. The House Unamerican Activities Committee and the Senate Internal Security Sub-Committee continued, and anti-communist

and patriotic groups grew in number and power.

The Viet Nam War, involving the same stated rationale of anti-communism and anti-oppression, evolved from a few American advisors to full scale direct combat. From the simple act of observation of the French in Indo-China to President Johnson's declaration that American national interest and honor were at stake, the war became a watershed test of national values. Governmental activities, some of which are only now becoming public, to control dissent and manipulate freedoms established in the Constitution were openly questioned. Claims by identified radicals about the immorality of U. S. involvement in Viet Nam were initially ignored, but gained credibility. The shift away from support of the war was accompanied by public confusion over what and whom to believe. In this setting the Watergate scandal, and resulting disclosures of illegal and unethical conduct at the highest levels, provided a national trauma over values.

It is common to look to established institutions to assist in the solution of national problems. The family, religion, police and health institutions are expected to contribute to social solutions. The schools have a long tradition of being asked to resolve social ills: racism, poverty, violence, illiteracy, etc., though it is not clear that success normally accompanies the attempts.[3] Within this context of trauma over national values, the schools become again a readily available institution to use in establishing or re-establishing a set of beliefs in generations of young citizens. While that does not explain all of the interest in values

education, it does provide a reason for renewed interest in the purposes, instruments and outcomes of one kind of values education, that involving nationalistic values.

It is the premise of this paper that the current crisis in national values will lead to a variety of proposals for reinspiring American citizenship through a particular form of nationalistic education, and that it behooves scholars and practitioners of social education to better understand this phenomenon. The purpose for such study is not to eliminate it, for I believe that so long as nation-states are in existence and in operation of national school systems, there will be some form of nationalistic education. This is an echo of V. O. Key.[4] Further, nationalistic education cannot be dismissed as wholly negative. There are distinct social advantages in the virtues of loyalty, responsibility and unity. Rather, better understanding of the purposes, practices and results of nationalistic education can lead to more thoughtful and productive evaluations of those purposes, practices and results. Mindless, uncritical education for national loyalty cannot be the essence of American freedom.

Nationalistic education can be defined as those educational activities designed to develop a belief in national values. It usually incorporates three dimensions: (1) development of positive feelings toward those rituals, ceremonies, symbols and persons which express or incorporate those national values; (2) development of competency in operating as a national citizen; and (3) development of negative feelings toward countries, ideologies, symbols and persons which are considered contra-national. All three aspects are

value-laden, though the development of citizen competency seems to be the least infused with doctrinaire judgments. Learning how government works and how to participate in it obviously incorporates the transmission of beliefs about the government, but it does permit examination of those beliefs and of the practices of citizenship. The development of positive national and negative contra-national feelings appears to be much more arbitrary, though I believe it is possible (indeed preferable) to develop educational programs which provide open inquiry into national values rather than indoctrination.

This position depends upon definitions of national values, patriotism and national interest. For example, if one argues that a dominant American value is public examination of controversial issues, including the possibility for dramatic alterations in the government, then the patriot can be one who rationally dissents and proposes change.[5] Unfortunately, that is not a commonly accepted definition. Thus, studies of nationalistic education more typically find uncritical indoctrination as the means for schooling students in national ideals.

The body of literature regarding nationalistic education includes studies of rationales, methodologies, supporting groups and individuals, practices, teaching materials, perceptions of people, and evaluations.

As an example of studies of rationales for such education, Cyrus Peake notes in his 1932 publication on education for nationalism in China that examination of aims, curricula and teaching materials used in schools give clues to the "dominant philosophies

and objectives of the politicians and educators of the past and present generation."[6] He further states the major conclusion of his study that the "motive and aim of these Chinese who have been responsible for the introduction of modern education into China in the course of the past 70 years was to build a strong nation resting on military power and capable of existing in a world of warring nations."[7] Peake's study shows how this was accomplished over a period of time resulting, after 1925, in an education system permeated with a "dogmatic and intolerant" spirit of modern nationalism.[8]

In his spirited and generally liberal book on patriotism published in 1917, Sir Charles Waldstein differentiates between patriotism and chauvinism by describing patriotism as love of country and chauvinism as hate of all others. He further suggests that there is a difference between true patriotism and false patriotism. Obviously, he is against chauvinism and false patriotism, instead favoring true patriotism which incorporates unselfish love and loyalty for country and the basis for "the most effective higher moral idealism, ending in the love of mankind."[9] True patriotism, to Waldstein, is an ennobling influence with ethical justifications that necessarily predispose a person to international patriotism, in "love and loyalty to a League of Civilised and Free Nations."[10] Waldstein advocates social and political education toward this end with special emphasis on civics and modern ethics.[11]

Education for both patriotism and chauvinism is suggested in a 1938 presentation by M. I. Kalinin to a conference of urban and

rural schoolteachers on the teacher's task in the socialist society.[12] Kalinin states that the most important work of a teacher is to bring up the new socialist man (sic), including the quality of "love, love for one's own people, love for the working masses. Man should love his fellow-men."[13] Another important quality of the new socialist man described by Kalinin is a "comradely spirit" because "we are surrounded by capitalist countries, because our Union is being systematically slandered and every bourgeois is longing for a suitable moment to crush the Soviet Union."[14] This duality of global love yet hate for those things considered contra-national exemplifies one kind of nationalistic education.

My own studies of state laws and regulations governing patriotic exercises and teaching about controversial issues indicate similar rationales used. They also include the required content of teacher behaviors expected and some materials to be used in nationalistic education.[15] In California a statement by the State Board of Education includes:

". . . 6. A principal outcome of this study (ed. teaching about communism) should be an understanding of and strengthened belief in the governmental system of the United States."[16]

Florida eneacted legislation for a course titled Americanism versus Communism that, among other things,:

"4 . . . shall emphasize the free enterprise-competitive economy of the United States as the one which produces higher wages, high standards of living, greater personal freedom and liberty than any other system of economics on earth.

5. The course shall lay particular emphasis upon the dangers of communism, the ways to fight communism, the evils of communism, and the false doctrines of communism." [17]

The Florida statute further stipulates that one of the guides

to be used in prescribing suitable textbooks are the official reports of the House Committee on Un-American Activities and the Senate Internal Security Sub-Committee, and that "No teacher or textual material assigned to this course shall present communism as preferable to the (government and economy) of the United States."[18]

Maryland prepared an official policy statement titled "Strengthening Democracy Through Education" which says that "The public school system is the basic institution for developing democratic behavior and for maintaining and improving our American way of life."[19]

Fifteen other states had some form of written statement, law or regulation regarding patriotic education and/or teaching about communism.

Studies of texts and other materials used in schools have shown nationalistic education in other countries.[20] A more recent study examined readers used for elementary schools in Communist China. Ridley, Godwin and Doolin, under a grant from the U. S. Office of Education, conducted a content analysis of ten readers used on mainland China for teaching the Chinese language. These books were used for the first five years of school, two volumes each year. Publication data indicated about 12 million books were published, and it is presumed that they were widely used. The researchers argue that the texts reflect the basic value orientations of the Chinese leadership, and that political socialization occurs through a society's formal educational system. They state: "Education, then, is a tool of politics;"[21]

Ridley, et al. found that the stories used in these Chinese

readers fell into three categories: primarily informational, aimed at specific political attitudes, and designed for behavioral modelling. The readers were used in formal education after the child had been informally educated under the educational policy known as the "five loves": love of the motherland, love of labor, love of science, love of the people and protection of public property. Heading the list of items that the three-to-four-year old should know was "the picture of Chairman Mao and the national flag." In the child's fourth year he should "know a few stories about how the Liberation Army fought the reactionaries." Fifth year is for intensification of the five loves. The six-year old was to have emphasized "hating reactionaries and American imperialism, on loving . . . peace-loving friendly nations, on loving the new China. . ."[22] Similar, but stronger statements coupling love of country with hate of contra-national ideas permeate the texts, and teacher education materials surveyed.[23]

On the grounds that teaching materials do have an influence on the political views of students, or at least reflect the society's views, text analyses represent one avenue of research in nationalistic education. These same grounds provide the arguments for censorship of educational materials, and thus, for studies of such censorship as a part of nationalistic education. There are many examples of censorship; so many in fact that there are regular publications which report on the cases.[24] An excellent book by another Jack Nelson, the more famous one who is a newspaperman, treats the subject well though much in this area has happened since publication

of the book.[25] Censorship designed to improve patriotic education is reported by P. A. Narasimha Murthy in his historical study of Japanese nationalism. He reports on the interference of government by the establishment of a screening system to judge texts for use in the schools. One result reported was a qualitative change in book content with much greater stress on patriotic ethics. Following scandals related to text selection procedures, text production in "morals, history, geography, copy-books and Japanese language readers" was nationalized. Science books followed shortly, and all the books were reviewed by a committee of representatives from the Army and Navy as well as the government.[26]

Patriotic organizations and other pressure groups have also contributed to forms of nationalistic education. Studies of the efforts of these groups and the resulting school practices show their influence.[27] This is an area in which relatively little recent research has been conducted.

Another kind of research interest in this area has incorporated instruments for measuring various responses to education for national loyalty. Remmers'work on student attitudes toward basic American documents indicates that some American values as expressed in the Bill of Rights do not seem to have been well taught.[28] Other studies in the political socialization literature hold promise for those interested in the study of national values education.[29] An especially interesting research by David Naylor developed instruments for use in differentiating among perceptions held by persons in various school statuses in regard to situations involving nationalistic

education.[30] In-school observation, interviews and even ethnographic research could expand our knowledge in nationalistic education.

SUMMARY:

This paper proposes that research and scholarship regarding nationalistic education be encouraged as a way of understanding this form of values education and to inform judgments made on the rationales, nature, form and practice of such education. It highlights some of the studies conducted in this field and suggests that several kinds of research on many topics can contribute to this body of literature. Historical research, current documents study, text and materials analysis, censorship investigation, socio-psychological instrument development and use, interviews, longitudinal studies and others can provide valuable knowledge.

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